

Federation Focus



Fall 2020

Vol.11 Issue 1

Federation Focus is published four times a year by the Jewish Federation of Central California.
"All Jews are responsible for one another." (Talmud:Shavuot 39a)

L'shanah Tovah!

May this
New Year
be filled with
health and
happiness for
you and
your family.

5781



Dear Friends,

As we approach the Jewish New Year, we are only two months shy of a controversial political election in which many of us have very strong feelings relating to the direction in which our country should proceed. This is in addition to dealing with the ongoing covid -19 pandemic and its health, economic, and social impacts on each and every one of us.

With all this on our shoulders I would like to take this opportunity to remind us of a prayer which we recite every year during the afternoon service of Yom Kippur:

"You shall not hate your brother or sister in your heart. Rather, you must reason with your kin so that you do not incur guilt on their account. But you must not seek vengeance, nor bear a grudge against your kin; you shall love your neighbor as yourself; I am the Eternal One".

As we navigate through the next two months it is in our best interest to remember and be guided by the wisdom of our ancestors, and implement three fundamental Jewish values.

1. **You must reason with your kin** Take the time to listen to the other side. You may not change minds, but you may learn, understand, and appreciate their point of view.
2. **Nor bear a grudge against your kin** No matter what the outcome of the conversation, while we may disagree on the implementation, we all want what is best for our country and our community.
3. **You shall love your neighbor as yourself** At the end of the day, despite our political differences, we are one family that has so much more in common than not.

As we celebrate 5781 years of Judaism, let's pledge to be better people and better friends, and together let's celebrate all that is good, positive, and promising for a wonderful Shanah Chadasha (New Year).

On behalf of the Jewish Federation of Central California, I wish you and your family a Shanah Tovah U'Mushart (a happy and blessed New Year).

Esti Barak, President, JFCC



On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Jewish Federation of Central California, I extend warm wishes for a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year 5781. I hope you and your families have remained safe during these very difficult times. Our world has changed so much this year; while it has given us many new challenges, we will get through this! If there is anything you need or just want to talk to someone, please feel free to contact our office and we will return your call as soon as possible.

We would like to encourage everyone to refer to emails that are sent out every Friday and list weekly events. If you are not on our mailing list, please provide your email address and I will add it.

Many thanks for your continued support this year despite the economic discomfort some of you faced. If you have not made your pledge, it is not too late. You can call the office, send me an email, or fill out the form on page 8 and mail it in. Your pledges help our community in the Central Valley and in Israel.

We gratefully accept both honor and remembrance donations. We notify the associates or family of those being honored or remembered. We also accept advertisements that will be included in the FOCUS. The cost is \$100 annually. We encourage our community to support our advertisers. Our contact information appears on page 8.

Lehitraot, Phyllis Farrow, Executive Director, JFCC

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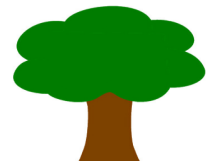
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Federation Profiles

Esti Barak

This is the first in a series of profiles of JFCC personalities

From growing up in a kibbutz founded by Holocaust Survivors including her parents, to running a commercial real estate firm throughout California, to serving on boards at TBI and the Jewish Federation, Esti Barak has demonstrated her leadership qualities in a variety of situations.

As a child on the kibbutz she lived in a “children’s house” from birth until high school age, seeing her parents for three hours of quality time every evening. Then she lived in a boarding school for teens during high school, at a mo-shav, where she worked after school every day as an aide for younger children.

Coming to California as a visitor after high school, she decided to stay here permanently. When she received her first paycheck she wondered why she was getting money to work. “Don’t they know I would have done this for free?” she told me during our recent telephone interview.

And indeed she has done a great deal of community work “for free.” She was a 14-year board member of Temple Beth Israel and also served for 4 years as vice president and two years as president. She took on the responsibility of president of the Federation’s board about a year ago after Murray Farber stepped down after 6 years in that role. She is proud of two efforts so far but acknowledges that others deserve credit for working together on these ventures.

The first is a display that will feature the history of the Jews in Fresno to be housed at the Fresno Fairgrounds. A committee led by Jeanna Francis is putting together a permanent exhibit that will feature hands-on projects as well as incorporating data about Jewish life in the area. While the Fairgrounds will not have its regular October schedule this year due to covid-19, the Federation’s exhibit is tentatively planned to be ready by October. The project is financed through a grant from the Federation plus funding from private donations. Looking to the future, a goal is to expand the Federation’s outreach to Jewish communities in Visalia, Bakersfield and Merced.

She also is proud of the Federation’s response to covid-19. Outreach has provided needed equipment to first responders, and through Jewish Family Services has provided personal support to individuals in the community who have indicated their need.

Esti’s continuing passion is about social justice and children, ingrained in her spirit from growing up in the kibbutz. She has been instructing 4th and 5th grade students at TBI’s Sunday school and wants to incorporate Jewish values into their daily life. She teaches them that values from a thousand years ago are still applicable today to their school experiences, family life and community interaction. She lovingly communicates these values to her two granddaughters, ages 6 and 11.

—Francine M. Farber, Editor

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LETTER FROM ISRAEL by Vic Rosenthal

Comments?
K2vco.vic@gmail.com

As you may have heard, Lebanon, our neighbor to the north, already suffering from an economic meltdown, experienced a huge explosion that leveled a third of Beirut.

Somehow several thousand tons of explosives-grade ammonium nitrate stored in a warehouse next to some rockets and things belonging to Hezbollah got set off. Hezbollah says there were no weapons, it was just fireworks, and nobody will admit to owning the ammonium nitrate.

Hezbollah, which loves to use ammonium nitrate to blow things up (like the Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires in 1994, a bus carrying Israeli tourists in Bulgaria in 2012, and – lest we forget – the U.S. Marine barracks in that selfsame Beirut back in 1982), recently got itself kicked out of Germany for stockpiling ammonium nitrate in Bavaria. But they don't know anything about the stuff that cratered the capital in their own country. **Right.**

The entire government of Lebanon has resigned in the face of public fury at the incompetence that allowed this to happen. But nobody knows how to free themselves from the Iranian-controlled Hezbollah militia, which is far stronger than the official Lebanese army.

Here in Israel many people wish *our* entire government would resign, even without an explosion. Prime Minister Netanyahu, a highly competent person that I have strongly supported in the past, now seems to spend most of his

time maneuvering to stay in power and keep from being jailed on corruption charges, and the factions of the “unity” government are at each other's throats. The government is even more tied up in its own internal politics than before, and is still flailing wildly in trying to deal with the health and economic problems we're facing.

It's telling that in today's news they are congratulating themselves on having reached a compromise on how to delay the adoption of a budget. What an accomplishment! A new record in not accomplishing anything while burning money and wasting critical time!

Meanwhile the second wave of covid-19 gets stronger from day to day, unemployed people's savings run out, our Hamas friends in Gaza go back to releasing incendiary balloons which ignite fires all over the southern part of the country, and the demonstrations in front of the PM's house every night get larger along with the number of new cases of covid-19.

Is there any good news? Well, there is a vaccine that is supposed to start human trials after the High Holidays (as you know, everything in Israel is “after the holidays”). And we have developed a Buck Rogers-y laser weapon that is supposed to burn the incendiary balloons out of the sky.

Unfortunately the laser isn't capable of figuring out how to open the schools safely this fall, or put money in the pockets of the almost 8% of the labor force that is unemployed.

Jewish women campaigned for suffrage

The year 2020 marks the Centennial anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, in August, 1920, which gave women the right to vote. What was Jewish involvement in this movement?

Frieda Flegelman, Alice Gitterman, Mary Grossman, Dora Wise Joachim, Rebecca Judah, Judith Loewenthal, Augusta Rosenwald: these are just a handful of the names of the myriad of Jewish women who worked for the suffrage cause in the United States. They acted as individuals rather than as members of Jewish organizations.

But they did belong to local, national and international suffrage organizations and marched in parades. Some of them even were arrested for picketing and protesting,

Anita Pollitzer, a granddaughter of a Prague rabbi, went from teaching Hebrew school in Charleston, S.C. to working alongside Alice Paul who headed the National Women's Party, and eventually became the vice president. Pollitzer picketed Wilson's White House until she was dragged off by the police.

Ernestine Rose was a 19th-century

rabbi's daughter from Poland who reinvented herself as an American atheist, freethinker and colleague of leading social reformer



Ernestine Rose

Susan B. Anthony. She was called the first Jewish feminist and was inducted in the National Women's Hall of Fame in 1996.

Leaders like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Alice Paul provided an undercur-

(continued on page 7)



JFS remains committed to supporting our community by reaching out to the most vulnerable among us: the frail elderly, the homebound, and the isolated. If you know someone in need, please call us at 559-432-0529 or email jfsfederation@gmail.com.

Our Tools for Life discussion group has started up again. In July, Karen Cohen, a nutritionist and wellness coach, spoke on "The care and feeding of your immune system." In August, Dr. William Podolsky, a radiation oncologist, updated us on the coronavirus. See below for September activities.

Jeri Horowitz

♥ JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES PRESENTS ♥

"TOOLS FOR LIFE" on ZOOM

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9375006082>
Discussion

Wednesday September 9 * 4 p.m.

*Anxiety, Depression, Isolation OH MY!
Managing mental health during COVID-19*

Led by Dr. Miriam Fishman, Clinical Psychologist

Senior Fitness Program with Dawn Owens
Every Thursday

9:00-9:45 am/stretching
9:45-10:15 am/chair exercise

I'VE ONLY ONE REGRET

*Excerpts from a poem
by a grateful JFS client*

Moved to Fresno County back in 2014. Single mom, teen son in tow, fled L.A., domestic violence, and everything that'd been.

No help. No family. Not a single familiar soul here.

Just hard times, tears, PTSD, and nothing to offer a hurting son who resented me for forcing him to leave behind everything he held close.

Years passed, and the fresh pain of loss, propelled me to search for any Jewish roots, to find a Jewish friend.

In my darkest time, JFS' light broke through, like a long lost friend who hears your cry, extends their hand, and helps you on the mend.

From a beautiful Kosher Mezuzah, and house-cleaning assistance that spared me from debilitating pain, to simply checking in... My gratitude, my lessened pain, I've no words to explain the beauty, when the sun shone through again.

While many thanks remain unsaid, it only now occurred to me..... I've only one regret: I wish I found JFS years ago, at the outset.

VISALIA VOICES

Congregation B'nai David * 559-732-3139
www.congregationbnaidavid.com

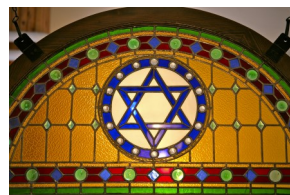
Our Board met on Zoom with our new Student Rabbi, Aria Caliguiri. She plays a number of musical instruments and we are looking forward to hearing her. She has many ideas for working with the Sunday School children.

CBD has been holding Shabbat services twice a month and our lay leaders are working toward increasing them. They are also working on Holiday Services, either on Zoom or in our courtyard.

We are working on an outdoor movie night in the near future, as well as other ideas in which the congregation can participate in a safe and social distancing setting.

CBD wishes all people in the Central Valley good health by staying safe, wearing masks and keeping a safe distance. L'Shana Tovah for the coming year!

Marsha Brooks-Smith



JFCC 2020 Allocations

Israel/Overseas

Jewish Federation North America	\$20,000
Magen David Adom	1,000
Israel Independence Day	6,000
Krembo Wings	1,990
Total Israel/Overseas	\$28,990

Local

JFS	20,000
Interest free loans	3,000
TBI/Yom Hashoah	1,000
JCRC	6,000
Camperships	1,500
New Cemetery	5,000
TBI/ Cemetery	8,000
Manchester School Holocaust Program	2,000
Jewish Studies Program (restricted fund)	5,000
Jewish Women's Theatre (restricted fund)	3,500
Total Local	\$35,000

TOTAL Israel and Local \$84,990

VISALIA VOICES

Congregation Beit Shalom * 559-308-1333
www.congregationbeitshalomvisalia.com
FBCaliforniaholocausteducation&resourcecenter

Congregation Beit Shalom continues to provide Shabbat candle lighting with blessings and songs either on Zoom or at our home in a small group setting. Hebrew class has begun again at the Shul, on Tuesdays, on a weekly basis. Zoom meetings are also available.

Our gift shop is open by appointment. Home made challah is available; please call in advance.

We want to thank many of you for your continued support of the California Holocaust Education & Resource Center. Building a Holocaust Memorial out of 6 million buttons is the long term goal. Current count is estimated to be at 5 million. If you would have time to help us by counting a box of buttons, this would be most appreciated.

Cynthia Fischer



Allocation Descriptions

Jewish Federation of North America: Umbrella organization to help support and sustain worldwide Jewry. One of our projects is HIAS, which helps refugees from around the world rebuild their lives.

Magen David Adom: With Israel under attack, MDA provides first responders, vehicles, and training, as well as transportation to hospitals to save lives.

Israel Independence Day: Yearly Yom Hautzmaut community celebration, marking the establishment of the modern state of Israel in 1948.

Kembo Wings: A youth movement in Israel for children with and without disabilities, providing weekly social activities.

Jewish Family Services: Provides services and support for the Central Valley Jewish Community (Visalia to Merced) regardless of age, income, or synagogue affiliation, and to strengthen Jewish identity, build community, and fortify family life.

Interest Free Loans: Promotes financial assistance to Jewish families in need by offering them a no-interest loan.

Yom Hashoah: A day set aside for Jews to remember the Holocaust.

Jewish Community Relations Council (JRCC): Acts as liaison between the Jewish community and our non-Jewish neighbors, engaging in dialogue, clarifying misunderstandings, and sponsoring pro-Israel speakers.

Camperships: Provides financial assistance to Jewish students wishing to attend a Jewish camp.

New Cemetery: Help start a fund to be used to purchase a new cemetery for the Jewish community, as TBI is running out of plots.

TBI Cemetery: Pays half of annual maintenance costs.

Manchester School / Holocaust Visit: Students will visit the LA Museum of the Holocaust.

Friends of the Jewish Museum: A Jewish display at the Fresno County Historical Museum, to preserve, protect, and educate the public about Jewish history in the Central Valley.

Jewish Studies: Endows a Jewish studies scholarship fund for Fresno State students who are enrolled in the Jewish Studies Program and who have completed at least two courses toward earning either the Jewish Studies Certificate or the Jewish Studies Minor.

Events: To provide programs that build support for the Jewish Federation and Israel as well as to provide educational and cultural information and entertainment to promote positive attitudes toward Judaism. This year funds will be used to sponsor a play by the Los Angeles Jewish Women's Theater.

FRESNO JEWISH FILM SERIES 2020/2021 SEASON

Are you ready for another film season? Yes, despite covid-19 we have a great season lined up for our movie lovers. We are going hi-tech and you and your family will watch a film from the comfort of your own home. After we have all seen the same movie, we will get together on Zoom and discuss the movie with our film friends. And best of all, it will be totally free!

We will be working with KANOPY, a film streaming service used by Fresno County Public Library, to make the movies available to you. You will need a library card.

If you do not have one, go on-line to <http://www.fresnolibrary.org/card/apply.html>

for directions or call your local library branch. On your computer, iPad, or cell phone, go to KANOPY.COM and enter your library card information. We will give you the movie to select. Watch it anytime you want during the month. If you have Netflix or Amazon, the film may also be available there. We will then schedule a Zoom meeting on the second Saturday of each month, starting Saturday, September 12, at 7 p.m., for a lively discussion of the film of the month.

We are extending this invitation to the film lovers of the Fresno area as a community outreach to keep everyone entertained and connected. While we don't know when we will be able to get together in person again,

we do have enough films to keep us virtually connected for the next 10 months.

Since last year's season is incomplete, we will hold the cancelled films over until we are able to have an actual in-person season. If you had season tickets, you will be given credit for the unseen films and meals at that time. Visit <https://fresnojewishfilm.org> for details.

The 2020/2021 Virtual Season will include:

September 2020	The Keeper
October	Monkey Business
November	Alan and Naomi
December	Go for Zucker
January 2021	Over the Rainbow (from The Story of the Jews)
February	Restoration: Boker Tov Adon Fidelman
March	Itzak - The Life of Violinist Itzhak Perlman
April	David
May	400 Miles to Freedom
June	Unorthodox - Rebellion and Orthodox Jewish teens

Hope to "see you at the movies!"

Your Film Committee: Elizabeth, Saretta, Judy, Sandy, Wendy, Sylvie, Pat, and David

Suffrage *(continued from page 4)*

current of anti-Semitism, countered by many Yiddish newspapers which wrote approvingly about suffrage. Rabbis gave sermons in support of the cause. During a series of statewide referenda on suffrage in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, the districts with heavily Jewish populations tended to vote most overwhelmingly for suffrage—and since only men could vote, that reveals Jewish men's support for suffrage.

"Votes for women" was a major political question in the United Kingdom. There was resistance from conservative members of the Jewish community who worried that their involvement might prompt an anti-Semitic backlash. Laura and Leonard Franklin formed

the *Jewish League for Woman Suffrage*. Women entered synagogues and disrupted services with their message. The organization's campaign caused some synagogues to give equal or partial rights to women. Women over 30 who owned property were given the right to vote in 1916, but it was not until 1928 that all British women gained that right.

Francine M. Farber, Editor

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Jewish Federations of North America protects and enhances the well-being of Jews and Jewish communities in North America, Israel and around the world. We strive to realize our core values of *chesed* (caring and compassion), *Torah* (Jewish Learning), *tikkun olam* (repair of the world) and *tzedakah* (social justice). As the focus of the federations, JFNA acts upon these values through philanthropy, strategic initiatives, and collective leadership—in partnership with local communities, national and international agencies.

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